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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/696,958	10/30/2003	James Patrick Clinch	I40/40303A	8485
279	7590	03/31/2006	EXAMINER	
TREXLER, BUSHNELL, GIANGIORGI, BLACKSTONE & MARR, LTD. 105 WEST ADAMS STREET SUITE 3600 CHICAGO, IL 60603			MITCHELL, KATHERINE W	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		3677		
DATE MAILED: 03/31/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/696,958	CLINCH ET AL.
	Examiner Katherine W. Mitchell	Art Unit 3677

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 January 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                            2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-9,21-23,27-32,34-39 and 43-64 is/are pending in the application.
  - 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) 1-9,21-23,27-32, 34-39, 43-64 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
    1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group III in the reply filed on 9/23/2004 has previously been acknowledged. Applicant is required to limit all pending and newly submitted claims to Group III, as shown in Figures 7-9, 22, and 23.

Figures 22 and 23 were listed as they could include the species of Figs 7-9. As applicant knows, restrictions are always applied to claims, and since there were no claims to the method, no restriction was made. Applicant's newly submitted claims 62-64 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons:

The claims are to a method of attaching members together, including welding, which is in class 29, distinct from the apparatus classified in class 411.

2. Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 62-64 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

3. As noted in the original election of species requirement on Sept 2, 2004,

*Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added.*

*An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.*

*Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of an allowable generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).*

4. *Per MPEP 811:*

*Since 37 CFR 1.142(a) provides that restriction is proper at any stage of prosecution up to final action, a second requirement may be made when it becomes proper, even though there was a prior requirement with which applicant complied. Ex parte Benke, 1904 C.D. 63, 108 O.G. 1588 (Comm'r Pat. 1904).*

*811.03 [R-3] Repeating After Withdrawal Proper*

*Where a requirement to restrict is made and >hereafter< withdrawn \*\*>as< improper, \*\*>if restriction< becomes proper at a later stage in the prosecution, restriction may again be required.*

*811.04 Proper Even Though Grouped Together in Parent Application*

*Even though inventions are grouped together in a requirement in a parent application, restriction or election among the inventions may be required in the divisional applications, if proper.*

5. Applicant should review all claims and withdraw or cancel all claims not readable on Group III, Figs 7-9, including those that examiner agreed to consider as not

burdensome. Although examiner originally indicated that some claims were rejoined as the search was not burdensome, this will be reconsidered in light of the added claims.

6. For example, based on a very cursory review, examiner does not see how at least 51,56, 57 read on species III.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Katherine W. Mitchell whose telephone number is 571-272-7069. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Thurs 10 AM - 8 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. J. Swann can be reached on 571-272-7075. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Katherine W Mitchell  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3677

Kwm  
3/28/2006

